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ABSTRACT

This report investigates the employment and status of women faculty and women graduate students at Brown University. Four different questionnaires designed to elicit factual and attitudinal information were addressed to departmental chairmen, male faculty members in general, women faculty members, and women graduate students. Statistics were also gathered as to the number of women teaching or employed for research, their ranks and their salaries. The report presents the data on the numbers and percentages of women faculty at Brown and their salaries, and discusses the results of the questionnaires, as well as of the interviews held with women faculty and women graduate students. These results indicated that women seeking full-time teaching jobs are likely to encounter discrimination. If they are single, they may be penalized early in their careers; if they are married, they may have problems in getting rank and salary commensurate with their qualifications. Salaries, however, of female faculty in regular ranks compared favorably with those of the male faculty. (AF)

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Report of the
AAUP Committee

on

The Employment and Status of Women Faculty
and Women Graduate Students
at Brown

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INTRODUCTION

In March, 1970, the Brown University Chapter of the American Association of University Professors appointed a committee to investigate and report on the employment and status of women faculty at Brown. It soon became apparent that the situation and status of women graduate students ought to fall within the scope of the committee's charge as well, and the following report thus concerns itself with both groups.

The committee drew up and circulated four types of questionnaires of a factual and attitudinal nature, addressed to departmental chairmen, male faculty members in general, women faculty members, and women graduate students. Copies of each questionnaire are attached to the first ten (numbered) copies of this report. Meanwhile, statistics were gathered as to the number of women teaching or employed for research, their compensation, etc. Before the results of the surveys, the statistics, the interpretations, and the recommendations of the committee could be worked out in final form, however, the events of last May intervened and completion of the report was delayed. It is therefore submitted in the fall of the 1970-71 academic year containing statistics assembled in the spring of the 1969-70 academic year. There has seemed to be no reasonable alternative to this that would not involve further, and lengthy, delay.

The committee would like to thank all those who took the time and thought to fill out and return questionnaires, as well as those women who made the extra effort of talking with the committee formally.

October 15, 1970

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I. Numbers and Percentages of Women Faculty at Brown¹

A. In the academic year 1969-70, according to Personnel Office statistics, there were 619 male and female faculty members at Brown. This figure includes all regular full-time faculty, all part-time and visiting faculty, all research faculty, all hospital-staff faculty and faculty whose salary is wholly or in part paid by sources outside Brown, all faculty who are also administrators, all faculty on leave with or without pay, and all Research Associates. Of these, 51 faculty members are women, or 8.24%. Women faculty members include seven Professors (3.14%); eight Associate Professors (5.19%) including one part-time and one visiting Associate Professor; fifteen Assistant Professors (10.42%) including one part-time visiting Assistant Professor; two Instructors (7.69%); seven Lecturers (29.17%) including two part-time Lecturers; and twelve Research Associates (25.00%) including two part-time Research Associates. Besides those staff included in the figure 619 (51 women), there are three Teaching Associates² who are women, one full- and two part-time; and four women Physical Education Associates, one full- and three part-time.

B. In the year 1969-70, according to Budget Office statistics³ for purposes of salary, there were 436 male and female faculty members at Brown. This figure includes only those faculty members whose major regular assignment is instruction. It therefore excludes all part-time faculty, visiting faculty, research faculty, hospital-staff faculty and other faculty whose salary is not 51% paid by Brown, faculty whose work is less than 50% teaching, faculty who are administrators, faculty on leave without pay, faculty in the Physical Education programs, and Research Associates. Of the faculty considered this way 21 are women or 4.81%. There are five women Professors (2.71%); one Associate Professor (.81%); eleven Assistant Professors (10.09%); one Instructor (6.66%); and three Lecturers (60.00%).

1. In order to determine the numbers, percentages, and salaries of women faculty at Brown, we have consulted with two different offices and received two different sets of figures which we have found it impossible to reconcile. Because it was of significance that women occupy a large number of part-time positions or positions in ranks below that of instructor, we needed to use Personnel Office statistics for part-time staff and Research Associates.

Information in paragraph A is based on statistics supplied by Miss B. Ormsbee, Supervisor for Benefits and Records, Personnel Office, as of October, 1969. Information in paragraph B is based on statistics supplied by Mr. J. Farnum, Director of the Budget, as of November, 1969.

2. This title is used to designate certain full- or part-time employees who do not, for a variety of reasons, hold regular faculty appointments. It is not to be confused with advanced graduate students who have augmented teaching assistantships, and are also called Teaching Associates. These three Teaching Associates were not polled and are not included in the statistics of this report.

3. This figure, used by the AAUP Committee on Faculty Compensation, is not identical with that of the voting faculty, which includes, for example, research faculty and some administrators.

C. Part of the difficulty in preparing this report has been due to the existence of certain specific titles with varying functions and duties, with wide variation in salaries and professional training. We did not include in our poll, for instance, Teaching Associates, because we were not aware of the category as a faculty rank. It is our contention that women qualified for faculty status are particularly likely to occupy such positions with a faculty-like aura but without the responsibilities or privileges of true faculty rank. While most male Research Associates hold that rank on a short-term basis for the pursuit of post-doctoral research immediately after receiving the Ph.D., many women who have long had the doctorate hold the position of Research Associate on a final basis (no hope of advancement), apparently because they are women or because they are faculty wives. These women are denied not only the status and salary of regular faculty appointments, but also the security of such appointments; even when they are working on a three-year grant, they often have one-year appointments.

D. There may well be some significance in the fact that until 1966-67 only two women had achieved the rank of full professor, and that this figure has more than tripled in the last four years, although the number is still only 3.14% of the total. But the full-time figures give a somewhat distorted picture because they include visiting professors hired for a fixed period of time -- usually one year -- but who were teaching a full load. Thus the number of permanent women faculty is smaller than it appears at first. Compare, for example, the figures for each rank in Paragraphs A and B above.

E. The average percentage of women faculty over the 10-year period remains roughly constant at 7.10%. As shown, despite the increase in the numbers of women, the percentage has remained approximately the same (see Table 2). Consequently we see no signs of real progress in the hiring of women.

F. This table shows that the vast majority of women have been in ranks below Assistant Professor. During 1969-70, for example, the percentage of women in the ranks of Assistant Professor and above was 5.75% whereas the percentage of women in the lower three ranks was 21.42%. And if we deal only with Lecturer and Research Associate we find that the percentage of women in the rank of Lecturer (29.17%) is five times greater and the percentage of women in the rank of Research Associate (25.00%) is four times greater than the percentage of women in the three upper professorial ranks combined (5.75%). These differentiations are also borne out numerically when we consider that out of 74 Lecturers and Research Associates 19 are women, whereas out of 521 Assistant, Associate, and full Professors only 30 are women. Of 24 Lecturers 7 are women. Of 48 Research Associates 12 are women.

And while the percentage of women in the Lecturer category has been as high as 36.36% (1967-68) and the percentage of women in the Research Associate category as high as 28.88% (1968-69), the highest percentage in any of the professorial ranks (in figures available for this report) was achieved in 1969-70 in the rank of Assistant Professor at 10.42%. This seems clearly to indicate that the lower three ranks are a repository for women (who are not considered for higher ranks).

G. Furthermore, the roughly 8% women on the faculty compares very unfavorably with the 28.72% women undergraduate students at Pembroke and the 31.09% women graduate students. Even the Assistant Professor figure of approximately 10% does not compare favorably with the 31% graduate student women. Thus it cannot be said

Table 1. Numbers of Women Faculty at Brown, from 1960-61 to 1969-70*

The figures below show full-time and part-time personnel. The full-time figures (F.T.) include, in addition to regular faculty, visiting faculty who taught a full schedule. The part-time figures (P.T.) include both part-time faculty who work on a permanent basis at Brown, and visiting faculty who taught only a partial teaching schedule.

Year	Professor F.T. P.T.	Associate Professor F.T. P.T.	Assistant Professor F.T. P.T.	Instructor F.T. P.T.	Lecturer F.T. P.T.	Research Associate F.T. P.T.	Total Faculty	Women Faculty
1960-61	1 0	4 0	8 1	3 0	2 2	4 1	389	26
1961-62	0 0	7 0	8 0	6 0	2 3	6 2	421	34
1962-63	0 0	7 0	4 0	7 0	2 2	7 2	441	31
1963-64	0 0	8 0	5 0	8 0	3 2	6 3	460	35
1964-65	1 0	8 0	7 0	5 0	3 3	9 0	483	36
1965-66	2 0	7 1	5 0	1 0	4 0	11 1	512	32
1966-67	5 0	6 1	3 0	1 0	4 2	6 1	516	29
1967-68	5 0	8 1	7 0	2 0	5 3	7 2	573	40
1968-69	7 0	8 0	10 0	1 0	6 3	10 5	606	50
1969-70	7 0	7 1	14 1	2 0	5 2	10 2	619	51

*Data obtained from the Brown Personnel Office.

Table 2. Percentages of Women Faculty at Brown, from 1960-61 to 1969-70*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Professor</u>	<u>Associate Professor</u>	<u>Assistant Professor</u>	<u>Instructor</u>	<u>Lecturer</u>	<u>Research Associate</u>	<u>Total % of Women</u>
1960-61	.95	4.71	9.89	6.98	21.05	10.87	6.68
1961-62	0	7.14	9.52	10.90	27.78	13.79	8.08
1962-63	0	6.54	4.30	14.00	21.05	15.79	7.02
1963-64	0	9.00	4.50	15.09	26.31	18.00	7.50
1964-65	.66	8.00	5.6	19.23	31.57	14.75	7.45
1965-66	1.21	7.69	3.88	3.70	19.05	18.18	5.12
1966-67	2.94	6.60	2.08	3.57	27.27	17.07	5.62
1967-68	2.59	7.20	4.73	6.67	36.36	16.36	6.98
1968-69	3.30	5.76	6.76	3.57	33.33	28.85	8.25
1969-70	3.14	5.19	10.42	7.69	29.17	25.00	8.24

*Data obtained from the Brown Personnel Office.

that departments in general are hiring new women staff in the same proportion that they are educating women. It seems clear that departments at Brown are willing to train women but not to hire qualified women in comparable proportions from comparable institutions. We assume that the proportion of women at Brown is comparable to that of other institutions of equal caliber.

Brown has also failed to provide an adequate number of role models for undergraduate women and graduate women as stressed, e.g., in the final report of the Pembroke Study Committee. This is evidenced when one compares the disproportion between the 8% faculty women and the 28.72% undergraduate women, the 31.09% women graduate students, or the total percentage of women students at Brown, both graduate and undergraduate, 29.38%. Even the 8% figure is deceptive because it includes Research Associates whose function is not primarily teaching (see Paragraph B above). Thus the ratio of women faculty to women students is approximately 30 to 1 whereas the overall faculty to overall student ratio is approximately 9 to 1.

II. Salaries of Women Faculty at Brown

A. The figures in this section deal solely with faculty members during the academic year, 1969-70.

Table 3. Average Faculty Compensation for Women Compared to Total Faculty Compensation

The salaries listed below for Professors, Associate Professors, Assistant Professors, Instructors, and Lecturers are all 9-month salaries. Bio-Medical salaries have been adjusted to 9/11 of annual salary. Research Associates' salaries, including bio-medical, are 12-month salaries.

Under "Women," the "Official" number and salary figures are based on Budget Office Statistics and are comparable to the Official statistics in the AAUP Report on Faculty Compensation. The first number in parentheses after "Poll" is the number of responses to this question; the second number in parentheses is the number of questionnaires sent based on Personnel Office statistics. The disparity between the number of questionnaires sent and the number of women faculty in each rank (according to Personnel statistics) listed in Paragraph A and in Table 1 is due to the fact that the statistics are for Semester I, while Semester II figures with the relevant additions and terminations of staff were used to determine the list to receive questionnaires.

		<u>Women Faculty</u>	<u>Total Faculty</u> ¹
<u>Professors</u>			
Official	(5)	19,800	19,000
Poll	(3/6)	17,273	17,500
<u>Associate Professors</u>			
Official	(1)	14,500 ₂	13,500
Poll	(3/7)	14,500 ₂	13,500
<u>Assistant Professors</u>			
Official	(11)	9,990 ₃	10,500
Poll	(13/16)	10,002 ₃	10,500
<u>Instructors and Lecturers</u> ⁴			
Official	(4)	9,125 ₅	9,500
Poll	(8/11)	8,586 ₆	--
<u>Research Associates</u> ⁷			
Official	--	--	--
Poll	(6/13)	8,458	--

1. All figures under "Total Faculty" except Research Associate are taken from the 50% column of the AAUP Report on Faculty Compensation, April 1970.

The sample is very small and we do not infer any sex-based salary discrimination one way or the other. However, those women who hold the rank of full or Associate Professor at Brown are often women with exceptional skills meeting exceptional needs, who are thus able, like some male faculty members, to command higher salaries than is normal for their rank in the University.

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2. This amount is based on the one response eligible under Budget Office criteria.
 3. This amount is based on eleven returns eligible under Budget Office criteria.
 4. These two groups were combined in the AAUP Report on Faculty Compensation but this was not indicated. There is a slight disparity between the number polled in that report -- 18 -- and the Budget Office's corrected official figure of 20.
 5. This amount represents an average of the salaries of women Instructors and Lecturers.
 6. This amount excludes returns from part-time personnel, ineligible under Budget Office criteria.
 7. Research Associates were not polled in the AAUP Compensation Report, but because so many women occupy these positions, we deemed it necessary to include them.

III. Questionnaire Results

The committee distributed questionnaires to four groups: Department Chairmen, Women Faculty Members presently at Brown, Women Graduate Students, and Male Faculty Members. Returns from the Women Graduate Student and Male Faculty questionnaires were less than half of the total number sent, but enough Department Chairmen and Women Faculty answered our survey so that these data could be analyzed in full, using computer techniques.

Department Chairmen

Although 22 Chairmen (of 30 to whom the survey was sent) returned our questionnaire, several were incomplete and could not be used for the entire analysis, reducing the sample to 18 for some topics. These included 9 departments in the Humanities, 5 in the Social Sciences, and 4 in the Sciences. The proportion of women faculty members in all 22 departments correlates with the overall proportion on the faculty (see Section I of the report) suggesting that these departments are a representative, though small, sample.

Proportion of Women Faculty by Rank¹

Professor	2.8%
Associate Professor	8.4
Assistant Professor	15.9
Research Associate	7.0
Lecturer	21.9
Instructor	3.9
Other (Teaching Associate)	1.6

These figures, as well as the official university statistics, again demonstrate that there are few women on the faculty at Brown particularly in the teaching or professorial ranks.

In regard to the hiring of women faculty members, the data from Department Chairmen indicate several trends. Most departments, in letters or other communication, do not consciously seek out women (only 4 of 18 departments or 22.2% do so). However, most departments have interviewed women, offered positions to them, or hired them during the past five years. Only three departments have offered no positions to women, but only two departments have offered positions to more than six women. In six departments no women have accepted positions in the past five years, while in 11 departments 1-5 women have taken positions. One department has hired more than 6 women in the recent past.

The hiring of women does not particularly correlate with division as the following chart shows.

1. Data from 22 departments, and includes 37 of the 52 women faculty members.

Hiring of Women in 18 Departments

	<u>None Hired</u>	<u>One Hired</u>	<u>2-4 Hired</u>	<u>5 or More</u>	<u>Total</u>
Humanities	3 (30%)	3 (30%)	3 (30%)	1 (10%)	10
Social Sciences	2 (50%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)	0	4
Sciences	<u>1 (25%)</u> 6	<u>2 (50%)</u> 6	<u>0 (0%)</u> 4	<u>1 (25%)</u> 2	<u>4</u> 18

A fair proportion of Humanities and Social Science departments as well as one Science department have hired no women in the past five years, although Humanities departments seem to be hiring a larger number of women than departments in other divisions. However, given the overall low proportion of women on the Brown faculty, the effort to hire women could be increased in all divisions, and especially augmented in the Social Sciences where there is presumably a sizable pool of qualified Ph.D.'s on which Brown might draw.

Responses from chairmen indicate that a woman's status as a faculty wife may be a barrier to her employment. In response to the question, "If a faculty position in your department became vacant, would your department have any reservations in offering the appointment to a qualified woman who is the wife of either a prospective or current member of your department?", eight (44.5%) of the 18 department chairmen felt their department would have reservations. Nine chairmen felt there would be no reservations (50.0%), and one chairman did not answer (5.5%).¹ Reservations concerning the hiring of a husband and wife team do not seem to be correlated with either the number of women already hired in a department or with the number of women graduate students enrolled. The problems which chairmen said were involved in hiring a couple in the same department are summarized in Section IV.

Reservations about hiring a faculty wife diminish when her husband is in another Brown department. Two chairmen expressed reservations (11.1%) while 15 (83.4%) felt their department would have no reservations. (One chairman - 5.5% - did not respond). Despite the fact that there is no official intra-departmental nepotism policy, these data indicate that there are strong feelings against hiring a couple in the same department. This is borne out by the personal experiences of several faculty wives (see Section IV) and may account for the high proportion of faculty wives holding non-professorial positions (such as Research Associate, Lecturer, and Instructor.)

1. Nine chairmen (50.0%) felt that the same reservations (if any) would apply in offering a position to a qualified close male relative of a member of their department. Three (16.7%) felt these reservations would not be applicable; six (33.3%) did not answer.

The questionnaires returned by chairmen also contained the following information concerning women graduate students. Among 18 departments 32.4% of graduate students are women, closely approximating the official figures given in Section I. Of the Teaching Assistants in these departments, 22.9% are women, but only 2.7% of the Teaching Associates and 6.2% of the Research Assistants are female. (The low proportion of women Research Assistants reflects the fact that most of these positions are in Science departments with few women graduate students.) In several departments which have a high proportion of women graduate students (40% or more) and which grant a high proportion of Master's degrees to women (30% or more), no women are teaching assistants. Of Master's degrees given in the 18 sample departments, 28.5%¹ were earned by women, while only 12.5% of the Ph.D. degrees were granted to women.

Concerning admission and financial aid, during the 1969-70 academic year, 41.8% of the applicants for graduate study in 18 departments were admitted. Approximately one-third of these (14.3% of the total) were women.² In discussing the conditions under which a fellowship or a teaching assistantship would be given to a man rather than a woman or vice versa, chairmen indicated that they would treat candidates equally, making the award on the basis of qualifications, promise, or possibly experience (in the case of a teaching assistantship).

This impartiality is also indicated by the fact that approximately one half of the women accepted by these 18 departments were given aid, the same as the proportion of men who were given aid. Chairmen were unanimous in stating that they would accept both members of a married couple who applied for admission in their department, and fourteen chairmen (four did not respond) indicated that if two graduate students in their department got married, they would continue to support both until they received the degrees for which they were working. (These data differ from graduate student opinions gathered in short interviews and reported in Section IV, where some women felt they were penalized on the basis of their sex and/or marital status.)

Women Faculty

Questionnaires were sent to 53 part-time and full-time women faculty members; 38 schedules were returned, giving us a sample size equal to 72% of the population, distributed in the following ranks:

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1. Many of these women were accepted into Master's programs (e.g., the MAT program) and were not expected to continue towards a Ph.D.
 2. Data on the proportion of women who applied, compared with the proportion of women accepted, are unfortunately unavailable.

	No. in Sample	% of Sample
Professor	3	7.8
Associate Professor	5	13.2
Assistant Professor	12	31.6
Research Associate	8	21.1
Lecturer	8	21.1
Instructor	2	5.2
	<u>38</u>	<u>100.0</u>

The marital status of these 38 respondents was as follows:

	No. in Sample	% of Sample
Single	16	42.1
Married to Brown Faculty	9	23.7
Married to Non-Brown Male	10	26.4
Other (widowed, divorced)	2	5.2
No answer	1	2.6
	<u>38</u>	<u>100.0</u>

The majority of respondents (23 or 62.5%) have been at Brown one or two years. Most of the eight Associate and full Professors have been at Brown for a much longer period of time. Two have worked their way up from the position of Instructor and two from the rank of Assistant Professor. The remainder were hired at the Associate Professor level. There are four examples of Research Associates or Lecturers who have held appointments at the same level for more than five years, including one woman who has been a Research Associate for 36 years. These data, even though the number of women involved is small, indicate two trends. One one hand, since few present women faculty were hired at non-professorial rank and since the proportion of women faculty has remained at 6 to 8% over the past decade, many women were probably hired as Research Associates, Lecturers, Instructors, and even Assistant Professors, and left Brown after a few years. On the other hand, some who were hired at a non-professorial rank continued in the same positions for a fairly long period of time. A few women beginning in the lower ranks have remained at Brown and been promoted.

Most women faculty felt they were treated equally with their male colleagues with respect to committee responsibilities, student advising, and teaching duties. Any differences reflected the fact that the woman respondent held a part-time, visiting, or research appointment that did not entail the same duties as a regular teaching position. Eighteen women felt they were not treated differently in terms of salary, while seven women felt they were. (Seven did not know; five gave no answer, and one replied that her salary was paid from non-university funds). Of the seven, four (18.4% of the sample) felt they received a lower salary than male colleagues of equal status.¹

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1. Of the remaining three, one stated that the difference was due to a part-time appointment; another is on a nine-month salary, and the third felt her salary was different since she did not hold a teaching position.

Seven women also felt they were differently treated in terms of tenure and promotion; of these, three (all with non-professorial appointments) specifically mentioned sanctions against hiring a husband and wife in the same department as the major factor in their treatment.

Eleven (28.9%) of the 38 women faculty expect to leave Brown in the near future for the following diverse reasons:

	No. in Sample	Percent
Retirement	2	5.2
Termination of a visiting appointment	2	5.2
Acceptance of a better position	3	7.8
Presently searching for a better position in order to leave when a new job is found	1	2.6
Desire to leave, but no specific plans	1	2.6
Husband is leaving	1	2.6
Returning to country of origin	2	5.2
No funds for rehiring	1	2.6
Plan to remain at Brown	25	66.2
	<u>38</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Most women (23 or 60.6%) felt that the attitude of their department towards them was one of fairness. Eight (21.1%) indicated the attitude was one of moderate acceptance; only two (5.2%) expressed the belief that there was an attitude of discrimination.² Most respondents also felt that female graduate students in their own department and women faculty in other departments were fairly treated, though many stated they were unable to judge the status of faculty women outside their own department.

Despite the attitude of fair treatment reported by most women, there is evidence from these faculty questionnaires that marital status affects a woman's employment. Single women tend to be hired at higher rank than married women, and there is a slight tendency for women married to men not on the Brown faculty to be hired at higher rank than faculty wives.

Of the nine women in our sample married to Brown faculty members, only two hold professorial rank (as Assistant Professors). Three are Research Associates; four are Lecturers. Four of these women felt their status as a faculty wife helped them to obtain their first appointment. (Two felt it hindered; two said it neither helped nor hindered; one did not know).

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1. Those accepting or searching for better jobs, or desiring to leave Brown were women in lower ranks, including two Assistant Professors, two Research Associates, and one Lecturer.
 2. These were both women who held non-professorial appointments; five women (13.1%) did not answer this question.

In contrast, five felt that they were hindered by their marital status in obtaining professorial rank and in receiving promotions.¹ Three women felt they were hindered in obtaining raises.² These same opinions were expressed in the interviews reported in Section IV.

The questionnaire asked for opinions from women faculty on several policy issues with the following results:

Do you think that Brown University should adopt the following proposals?:

	Agree	Disagree	Don't Know
1. Give priority to the hiring and promotion of women faculty until the proportion and rank distribution of women faculty at least equals the sex ratio among undergraduate and graduate students.	13(34.3%)	23(60.5%)	2(5.2%)
2. Do away with rules which prohibit the hiring of husbands and wives in the same department or same institution (i.e. "nepotism rules") where they are unwritten policy.	33(86.9%)	4(10.5%)	1(2.6%)
3. Work toward the establishment of day-care centers for preschool children of employees, faculty and students.	34(89.6%)	3(7.8%)	1(2.6%)
4. Insure that all women employees, whether married or not, have fringe benefits (e.g. insurance, retirement, educational and health benefits) equal to those of men.	38(100.0%)		
5. Endorse the principles of maternity leave and family sick leave for all employees, faculty and students.	37(97.4%)	1(2.6%)	

On the basis of the responses to questionnaires, it appears that women faculty at Brown feel they are treated fairly by their departments. One major area of difficulty is that the so-called "nepotism policy" prevents wives of Brown faculty members from obtaining positions at professorial rank. Some of the more subtle problems encountered by women faculty and graduate students were not apparent from the statistical analysis of the surveys, but were revealed by short answers to survey questions and by interviews.

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1. One felt being a faculty wife was helpful; two stated their status neither helped nor hindered; one answered "don't know".
 2. One respondent felt the status of faculty wife was helpful; three said it neither helped nor hindered in obtaining raises; two replied, "don't know."

IV. Interviews with Women Faculty and Women Graduate Students

The brief answers on the questionnaires for women faculty and graduate students were in some cases supplemented by written commentary, and the committee offered to meet and talk with any woman who so wished. This section of the report presents a summary of the most commonly encountered attitudes and observations among those who talked with the committee or who wrote comments on the questionnaires.

Because the interviews scheduled by the committee coincided with the beginning of the strike activities at Brown and the general upheaval attendant upon this, some of those women who had made appointments for interviews were unable to meet them. Of the women interviewed over a two-day period, ten were women faculty (better than 25% of the 38 women faculty who returned completed questionnaires), and seven were graduate students.

A. Women Faculty. In general, these women faculty felt that they were penalized whether they were married or single. In the case of the single woman, the penalty first arises at the time of job-seeking, when many potential employers feel that a single woman is primarily interested, not in her profession, but in finding a husband. Once hired, the single woman may have to weigh the professional results of a decision to marry. If she should marry a faculty member at her own institution, will she be asked to resign? Will she be denied proper salary increases because she is no longer considered self-supporting? Married women, on the other hand, are often penalized because men overestimate the amount of time and energy required of a working wife and mother. Apparently, little consideration is given to the fact that planned pregnancies, in combination with already-flexible academic scheduling and day-care for preschool children, permit the female to fulfill the same responsibilities as male faculty.

Although the younger single woman may be regarded as a "bad risk" by some departments, sometimes a woman who remains single has a better chance of rising to the rank of full professor than a married woman. This was attributed, not to the added family responsibilities of the married woman, but rather to the unwillingness of departments to continue to treat married women like other staff members.

Married women, particularly faculty wives with professional academic qualifications, found it easier to be hired by the University, but much more difficult to get professorial rank (whether the husband was or was not a faculty member). The contrast, therefore, amounted to this: that the single woman might encounter more initial difficulty but would have better long-range career prospects; that the married woman would more easily find employment but would be handicapped in securing appropriate salary increases, advancement, or tenure.

Faculty wives who are qualified to hold a faculty appointment have additional problems. Despite the fact that there are no officially stated University "nepotism" rules, many departments believe that such rules exist and operate on the basis of that assumption. More than one person pointed out that graduate students frequently marry other graduate students, which results in "faculty couples," and that, as more women attend graduate schools, it is increasingly more difficult to justify a de facto prohibition on the granting of regular faculty status to such wives. Few of those interviewed favored the idea of husband and

wife teaching in the same department, but agreement was substantial that the fairest attitude is for individual cases to be judged individually and for departments not to rule out the hiring of a qualified woman solely on the basis of her husband's position. Departmental chairmen (or others) sometimes refuse to hire qualified women whose husbands are in the same department on the grounds that the tenure decision (for husband or wife) might become extremely "delicate," particularly if the department has few members. Some argued that they might not be able "to judge objectively the wife of a close colleague." The women interviewed consider such arguments feeble and unjustifiable excuses to escape from having to make such judgments. In a small department, all tenure decisions are "delicate."

Another frequently-invoked reason for not hiring husband and wife was that if both resigned to go and teach at another school there would be two slots to fill rather than just one. If both are employed in a single small department, this was granted to be valid. However, if both persons are well and fairly treated, they are not likely to leave for another school. If they teach in separate departments and the husband accepts an offer which necessitates his wife's leaving her department, the problem lies really in perspective. Why should the validity of reasons for leaving a position depend on one's sex? Why assume that it is acceptable for a man to leave for reasons of personal gain -- more prestige or more money elsewhere -- while it is unacceptable for a woman to leave for reasons of personal gain -- in order to continue living with her husband? In fact, the reasons for any faculty member's leaving are of little real consequence in the long run, since anyone is free to change jobs for whatever reasons he -- or she -- chooses.

The situation of the married woman whose husband is not a faculty member is not, apparently, much better, despite the absence of possible "nepotism" conflicts. These women, properly qualified, may have little difficulty in being hired, but "regular" appointment, permitting the possibility of tenure, retirement benefits, etc., is hard to obtain. These women, along with faculty wives, tend to be relegated to the ranks of Research Associate and Teaching Associate. They are denied the salary, the prestige, and the security which men of similar qualifications would automatically receive, and hope of advancement is almost nonexistent.

On the positive side, it appears to be true that if a woman is hired in a "regular" faculty capacity at Brown, she is not likely to feel personal discrimination in course load, committee assignments, or professional judgment. Scattered instances of individual prejudice or patronage do not materially affect this overall picture. The most crucial problem seems therefore to lie in the terms and conditions of the hiring process itself, and in the possibilities of advancement open to the woman faculty member.

In the matter of salaries, a certain amount of penalty may be felt by a woman. See Section II of this report. One startling example of what the committee feels to be unfair salary discrimination cannot be documented in dollars and cents because of the unavailability of comparative salaries; but we believe that the men's physical education staff members (as distinct from the coaching staff) are definitely paid proportionately more for their hours of teaching than their female counterparts.

B. Women Graduate Students. Those students whom the committee interviewed expressed no dissatisfaction with admissions procedures as they have been able to observe them. In the matter of financial aid, however, there were complaints. Once again, the division between the married and the unmarried women was a significant one. Some single students felt that men received preferential treatment because they are taken more seriously, and hence receive more financial aid. This was not a consistently nor strongly held view, however, and may depend largely on departmental policies.

In the case of married women students, there were more problems. If the husband were also a graduate student at Brown, the total income of the two persons is sometimes the basis of awards rather than individual merits; yet in the case of a male graduate student whose wife holds full-time employment outside the University, the wife's income is often not counted in determining the amount of aid to be given the husband. Thus some graduate women are financially penalized because their husbands are also graduate students. It also appears that married graduate women with non-student husbands receive less financial aid, despite cases of need.

A number of the graduate students interviewed had complaints about negative attitudes on the part of faculty members. They felt that some professors made it clear in both overt and covert ways that women students could not be taken seriously. While such attitudes do not affect all women who are subjected to their influence, it does require considerable self-confidence to stand up to this kind of negative expectation. Consistent treatment as a person from whom not much can be expected will tend to induce, in the woman so treated, greater and greater limitations on the kinds of achievements she believes possible for herself. Factors of this kind should certainly be taken into account in assessing the success of female graduate students in the completion of advanced degrees. Women faculty members also talked of this kind of attitudinal prejudice and of the problems in overcoming it when it is encountered. On the other end of the scale, we heard of male faculty members who treat women graduate students as sex objects, subjecting them to innuendo or improper advances. Extreme cases of either kind of bias were rare, but milder cases appear to be not uncommon.

The relative paucity of women faculty members at Brown worries women graduate students because they want and need role models, i.e., women practicing the profession for which they as students are being trained.

Not all of those who talked with the committee have engaged in job hunting, nor were the experiences of all those who had sought positions the same. The consensus, however, among faculty women and graduate students, was that prejudice against women does operate, and many cases are known and cited of well-qualified and well-recommended women who had difficulty finding positions at the same time that less qualified, less well-recommended men more easily found employment. Obviously this must vary considerably from school to school and from field of specialization to field of specialization; it still appears undeniable that much of the time, women leaving graduate school for their first full-time jobs will encounter difficulty solely on the basis of their sex. One woman student remarked that the discrimination increases as one goes through graduate school, and that it becomes most crucially apparent at the time of job-seeking. Others made similar statements, and faculty experience substantiated this.

One specific complaint at Brown is that listings of job openings at the Brown Placement Office are not available to females, despite federal legislation to the contrary. This committee is directing the attention of the administration to this flagrant violation of the law.

V. Conclusions

A. Statistics as well as opinions recorded above indicate that Brown does not have enough women faculty members, particularly in the upper ranks, to provide a significant number of role models for female students.

B. Women seeking full-time teaching jobs are likely to encounter discrimination. If they are single, they may be penalized early in their careers; if they are married, they may have problems in getting rank and salary commensurate with their qualifications. Brown faculty and administration can help women graduate students in their search for employment, and Brown can, by its own hiring practices, set a non-discriminatory example.

C. At this University, the ranks of Research Associate,* Teaching Associate, and Lecturer are too often used as a repository for women fully qualified to hold professorial rank and to be considered for tenure; the opportunity for promotion is thus denied them, regardless of qualifications and performance.

D. De facto prohibitions on husband-wife teams are detrimental to the University at all levels, and are hard to defend, as the report on the interviews indicates. Such prohibitions are discouraging to the ambitions of women graduate students who are likely to marry men in the academic profession, and may have an adverse effect on the completion of their doctoral degree. At the same time, these prohibitions deprive the University of a wider choice of potential faculty and of many different individual talents which cannot even be considered for available jobs.

E. The salaries of female faculty in "regular" ranks compare favorably with those of male faculty. Although this is also true at the ranks of Lecturer and Research Associate, the fact that women tend to remain at this level while men usually go rapidly on to professorial positions indicates that these women are not being adequately compensated.

F. The basic failure in attitude encountered in male faculty members appears to be rooted in preconceived ideas of what "women" (all women) are like. Lower expectations for female students and a refusal or inability to treat women seriously, as actual or potential colleagues or as students, may be, in the long run, psychologically damaging. In any case, these attitudes limit aspirations, and their cumulative effect is humiliating.

G. Among women interviewed by the committee, the desire to be treated the same as any other member of the profession, regardless of sex, was most ardently expressed. Such proposals as, e.g., the establishment of day-care centers, were regarded as being a benefit to the whole community, not just to women.

* See Section I, paragraph C.

Resolutions and Recommendations

A. We recommend that the following resolutions be adopted by this chapter and appended to the committee report for submission to the faculty, the President, and the Corporation.

1. As formal recognition of the importance of its role in the education of outstanding young women, and in support of the aspirations and career goals of its women graduates, Brown University reaffirms the right of all women to realize their intellectual and professional potential in the practice of their chosen careers, without sacrifice of the responsibilities and rewards of marriage and motherhood. To these ends it will do its utmost to encourage the pursuit of career goals for women and the use of women's skills and training to the benefit of society at large.

2. The hiring of women faculty shall be a matter of urgent priority in the search for new faculty members. Appointments of women faculty within each department should reflect the proportion of women Ph.D.s nationally in that field, and the overall number of women faculty at Brown should be approximately in proportion to the overall number of women graduate students at Brown. Since 31.09% of current graduate students (1969-70 figures) here are women, the University should reach a goal of approximately one-third women faculty by 1975, assuming the proportion remains the same, with the understanding that ultimately women shall have the same proportion of appointments in each professorial rank as men.

3. Since there is no official policy forbidding the employment of the spouse of a faculty member, either within the University or within the same department, women candidates for faculty positions shall be considered on their own merits, without regard for their marital status, and, in the case of married women, without regard for the position or financial circumstance of the husband.

4. Women qualified to hold regular faculty appointments shall not be relegated to special ranks like Lecturer or Research Associate on any long-term basis (they should normally hold appointment at these ranks for no longer than three years), but shall be given regular professorial appointments commensurate with their training, ability, and performance.

5. Brown University reaffirms its policy that all women faculty, regardless of marital status, must be given fringe benefits equal to those of male faculty.

6. The principle of paid maternity leave - at least six weeks with pay, and the option of the remainder of a semester without pay - is endorsed.

7. The establishment of day-care centers for the pre-school children of faculty, staff, and students is supported in principle and will be made a matter of early financial priority.

B. We further recommend that the chapter take the following action:

1. Recommend to the FPG or the faculty a study (by a new committee of the FPG or by a special committee of the faculty) of the status of non-appointive women employees (secretarial staff, etc.), especially in regard to fringe benefits, salary differential, and work-load discrimination.

2. Institute a continuing study by the chapter of annual appointments of women in each department, including a study of fringe benefits.